

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Press Service



EC752
no. 8

Release - Immediate.

January 18, 1922.

EUROPE'S NEED FOR FOOD LARGE

Survey by U. S. Department of Agriculture
Shows Many Countries Have Greater
Deficiencies than Expected

The need for our foodstuffs in European countries reaches many millions of tons, report G. F. Warren and W. F. Callander of the United States Department of Agriculture, recently returned from the study of agricultural and market conditions in Europe. Germany alone will require 2,000,000 tons of imported foods before the next harvest. Czechoslovakia, Austria, Italy and France are also looking to America for huge quantities to supplement their own supplies.

Drought in Europe

The severe drought that occurred in Europe last spring came after the rye and wheat crops were out of danger. In fact the abundant sunshine, coupled with sufficient moisture in the soil to ripen these crops resulted in excellent yields, declares Dr. Warren, but barley and oats were generally damaged and corn, potatoes, sugar beets and fodder crops suffered most of all. For example, in Germany the wheat yields per acre were 20 per cent above last year, while potato yields per acre were 13 per cent less than last year. In Hungary the wheat yield per acre was 14.4 bushels last year and 17.5 bushels this year. But the yield of potatoes per acre was 121.2 bushels last year and 66.7 bushels this year. Corn yielded 24.9 bushels per acre last year and 13.6 bushels this year.

The drought damaged pastures and fodder crops to such an extent that in some countries live stock was sold off as a result. Such sales tended further to depress the meat markets. The drought also delayed the planting of winter wheat until the late rains came. The area seeded was reduced and in much of Europe the sowing was done after the best date for seeding, so that the crop next year will be injured unless the winter is very favorable.

Surplus-Producing Countries of Europe

Roumania's exportable surplus will probably be less than 300,000 tons, reports L. G. Michaels, who is making similar studies for the Department of Agriculture in that country. This would indicate that earlier suppositions



that the Roumanian surplus would be an important source of supply for Europe are no longer tenable. Great difficulty is being experienced in Roumania, writes Mr. Michaels, in concentrating this small surplus because of shortage of cars, price fixing, and governmental conditions. The corn crop is much below last year's and is barely sufficient to supply local needs.

Hungarian officials stated in November that permits had been issued for the exportation of 100,000 tons of wheat flour. Later the amount was somewhat increased. It is doubtful, however, whether this amount will actually leave the country, as the Danube, the principal outlet, is frozen over and there is a serious shortage of cars.

The Polish grain crops were much better this year than last and permits were issued in the fall for the exportation of 50,000 tons of rye and barley. Little progress has been made, however, and it is doubtful whether Poland will be a significant factor in the export situation this year. It is even possible that imports will be required before the next harvest.

All of these countries combined will play a very small part in the export situation this year.

Although the production of wheat and rye in Europe in 1921 was much above 1920, a large amount of grain must be imported before the next harvest. The consumption of the new crop began about a month earlier than usual; the fodder, root and potato crops are smaller than usual; the condition of the fall-sown crop of wheat and rye is not satisfactory so that the farmers are inclined to hold over some of this year's crop.

European Crops

The total production for 18 European countries for 1920 and 1921 was as follows:

	1920	1921
	Bushels	Bushels
Wheat-----	846,691,000	1,050,640,000
Rye-----	493,887,000	688,644,000
Barley-----	430,456,000	462,543,000
Oats-----	1,157,753,000	1,158,325,000
Potatoes-----	2,690,435,000	2,399,517,000
Corn-----	321,843,000	283,214,000

Countries with a Deficit

The countries in Europe that are importing and must continue to import grain are: The United Kingdom, the Scandinavian countries, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and France.



The wheat crop in the British Isles this year was large but reports state that most of it has been consumed. Probably imports will continue at nearly the usual rate. The German needs for the remainder of the year were given on November 1 as approximately 2,000,000 tons. Very little has since been imported. When the mark dropped so low in value the German Government delayed its purchases of grain waiting for a hoped-for improvement in the exchange rate. One of the primary factors in the wheat situation is the ability of Germany and Austria to buy. On December 1 the needs of Czechoslovakia were stated by officials to be 250,000 tons. Austria is importing and will need to import 50,000 tons of grain a month for the balance of the year. The needs of France will be dependent on the amount held by farmers but probably an importation of half a million tons will be required. It is stated that Italy will need about 1,000,000 tons in addition to her own crop in order to furnish a normal supply to her people. The United Kingdom and Holland have been heavy importers of corn during the year and will probably continue to import.

